

# BULLETIN

OF THE

## ESSEX INSTITUTE.

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REGULAR MEETING, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1871.

THE President in the chair. Records of preceding meeting read.

Mr. JAMES H. EMERTON read a paper on the *Flying Spiders*, illustrating his remarks by drawings on the black-board.

Some spiders, he said, have a habit of rising into the atmosphere by the help of currents of air acting upon threads of cobweb attached to their bodies. The threads before rising are often tangled together, covering the grass and bushes, and floating in the air in large pieces.

In Europe large flights of this web often take place, particularly in the fall of the year. The web rises usually in the morning, when the weather is clear and calm, and descends again in the afternoon, as the day becomes cooler.

Travellers on the coast of South America have several times seen the rigging of their vessels covered with cobwebs, blown off from the shore. Mr. Darwin, in his journal of the voyage of the *Beagle*, gives an account of



a case of this kind when the vessel was sixty miles from land. A letter from an officer on one of the U. S. vessels, says that last autumn, when near Montevideo, after a wind, the rigging was filled with cobwebs, and little spiders fell down all over the deck.

In our own country such showers have seldom been noticed, although the bushes and grass are often covered with web, which float out in the air to the length of several feet. One calm, warm morning in June, 1858, I was watching some little spiders, about one-tenth of an inch long, on the top of a fence in Bridge street, Salem. Occasionally one would stop and turn up its abdomen, at the same time straightening up its legs as if to get as high as possible. A thread then passed upward from the spinnerets at the end of the abdomen, increasing in a few seconds to a yard in length, when the spider and thread rose slowly upward, until the thread was entangled in the branches of the trees above. Mr. R. P. Whitfield tells me that once, near Utica, N. Y., while crossing a field of stubble, he saw a multitude of spiders running up and down the stalks, and when they found one to suit them, letting a thread pass upward from their bodies, and when enough had passed, rising with it into the air. Most experiments tend to show that currents of air are the cause of the spinning of these threads, but others have believed that they could be better accounted for on electrical principles. Some also have believed that the spiders can fly without the help of web or currents of air.

The President read a communication from Mr. M. A. STICKNEY, "on *Nathaniel Ames and his Almanacs*."

The almanac, one of the first productions of the New England press (1639), always held a prominent place among the essentials of a New England home in the

olden times, and was the usual appendage to the large fire-places, around which cluster so many pleasing associations. These annual sheets being sewed together and thus preserved with scrupulous care, in a continuous series, formed a diary of the domestic circle. On the margin of the pages, or on the inserted leaves, were frequently noted the principal events of the family, sometimes of the neighborhood, and occasionally those of a more general interest.

The small number of these old memorials that have escaped from the ravages of time, are considered very valuable by the antiquary and the student of local history. From these time-worn and dingy leaves many important facts may be gleaned, or at least a careful perusal will not be time misspent.

Mr. Stickney commenced some thirty years since to preserve almanacs, and has been very successful in his efforts in this direction. His collection is very extensive, and several of the series are perfect and in good condition. From the abundant resources at his command, he has been enabled to prepare a series of valuable and interesting articles on almanacs and their authors. Four numbers have been printed in Vol. VIII of the "Historical Collections of the Institute;" others are in preparation.

1. Nathaniel Low, 1762 to 1827, inclusive (none printed in 1766), sixty-four numbers. Mr. Low, the eldest child of Nathaniel and Sarah Low, was born in Ipswich, Dec. 23, 1740 (O. S.). He was a physician, and settled at Berwick, Me., continuing there the publication of the almanacs which he had commenced at Ipswich, in 1762. These almanacs may be considered one of the most important series ever published in New England, both on account of the period in which they were issued, that of the Revolution, and for the number of



years they were printed. After his decease in September, 1808, this publication was continued by his son, Nathaniel.

2. Amos Pope was born Feb. 22, 1771, in the first Parish of Danvers. He was the son of Nathaniel and Mary (Swinnerton) Pope, and his ancestors were among the first settlers of Salem. At the age of twenty he undertook to prepare an almanac for the year 1792, which under great disadvantages he accomplished. He also prepared almanacs for 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, and 1797, these were all printed except the one for 1796. After 1797, with the exception of a few winters devoted to school keeping, he resided upon the ancestral farm, where he died January 26, 1837.

3. Samuel Hall, son of Jonathan and Anna (Fowle) Hall, was born in Medford, Mass., Nov. 2, 1740. In 1768 he was persuaded by Capt. Richard Derby to remove to Salem, and under the patronage of the Derbys, and other patriotic citizens, established the *Essex Gazette*; the first number was issued Aug. 2d of that year;—the first paper in Salem. He printed the *Essex Almanac* from 1769 to 1773, inclusive. He removed to Cambridge in 1775, and soon afterwards to Boston. He returned to Salem in 1781 and commenced printing the *Salem Gazette*, and in 1785 he again removed to Boston, where he died, Oct. 30, 1807.

4. Daniel George, of Haverhill, 1776 to 1787, inclusive, except for 1785; none printed that year. He removed from Haverhill to Falmouth (now Portland), Me., previous to 1783 and was the publisher there, for a time, of the *Gazette of Maine*. He died suddenly, Feb. 4, 1804, aged 45.

This communication, the fifth in the series, contains a brief notice of Nathaniel Ames and his series of alma-

nacs of thirty-eight successive years, with extracts from the different issues and the various jottings on the margins and interleaved pages, the whole forming a valuable contribution to our local history.

Nathaniel Ames was born at Bridgewater, July 22, 1708, he was the son of Nathaniel, grandson of John, and great grandson of William, the immigrant ancestor, born at Bruton, Somersetshire, England, Oct. 6, 1605, and settled in Braintree, Mass., as early as 1640. He was a distinguished physician and mathematician, and removed to Dedham in 1732. At the age of seventeen he calculated his first almanac, which was published in 1726. His almanacs were superior to those of his contemporaries, and obtained a great circulation; 60,000 were annually sold in the New England colonies. He died July 11, 1764. The almanacs were continued for several years by his son Nathaniel, a graduate of Harvard in 1761, a physician, and died at Dedham in 1822. The celebrated Fisher Ames "one of the most brilliant men this country ever produced," was his third son, born April 9, 1758, graduated at Harvard 1774, and died July 4, 1808. "In the old church yard at Dedham, is a plain white monument, on which is the simple inscription FISHER AMES."

This communication was referred to the Publication Committee, and will probably be printed in the "Historical Collections."

The Secretary announced the following correspondence:—

From New England Historic-Genealogical Society, Feb. 2; Pennsylvania Historical Society, Feb. 2; Thronhjelm Kongelige Norske Videnskabernes-selskab, Sept. 28, 1870; Boardman, S. L., Augusta, Me., Jan. 25; Brigham, W. T., Boston, Jan. 25; Hotchkiss, Frank E., New Haven, Conn., Jan. 17, 23; Mann, Mary, Cambridge, Dec. 4, 1870; Paine, N., Worcester, Jan. 24, 25, 28; Preble, George Henry, Charles-town, Dec. 18, Jan. 31; Perry, Wm. Stevens, Geneva, N. Y., Jan. 20; Stephens, Wm. Hudson, Copenhagen, N. Y., Jan. 27; Trippe, T. Martin, Alexandria, Minn., Dec. 30; Williams, N. M., Methuen, Jan. 26.

## THE LIBRARIAN announced the following additions.

### *By Donation.*

- BUTLER, BENJ. F., M. C. Kelly's Speech in U. S. H. R., Jan. 10, 1871. Maynard's Speech in U. S. H. R., Dec. 15, 1870. 8vo.
- CLOUTMAN, W. R., of Charleston, S. C. Memorial Addresses on Wm. Pitt Fessenden, Dec. 11, 1869. 1 vol., small 4to.
- DODGE, ALLEN W. Regulations of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. 1 vol. 8vo. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 20.
- GREEN, S. A., of Boston. The Tariff Question, by E. B. Bigelow, 1 vol. large 4to. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 17.
- HOLDEN, N. J. Massachusetts Legislative Doc. for 1865. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 75.
- HUNTINGTON, A. Five pamphlets.
- KIMBALL, JAMES. Three pamphlets.
- LEE, JOHN C. Commercial Bulletin. Jan'y, 1871.
- STONE, JOHN O., of New York. Report of the Metropolitan Board of Health for 1869. 1 vol. 8vo.
- SUMNER, CHARLES. U. S. S., U. S. Coast Survey for 1867. 1 vol. 4to.
- PALFRAY, C. W. The Manufacturer and Builder for March, April, 1870. Files of the Philadelphia Inquirer for 1866-7-8-9-70. Files of the Commonwealth, 1866 to 1870.
- PEABODY, JOHN P. The Fireside Favorite for 1870.
- PEABODY, S. E. Littell's Living Age from 1849 to 1869 inclusive.
- ROPES, WM. L., of Andover. Catalogue of Andover Theological Seminary, 1870-71, 8vo.
- WALKER, FRANCIS. Characters of undescribed Lepidoptera Heterocera, 8vo, 1869.
- WATERS, J. LINTON, of Chicago, Ill. Message of John M. Palmer, Gov. for Ill., Jan. 4, 1871.

### *By Exchange.*

- BIBLIOTHEQUE UNIVERSELLE ET REVUE SUISSE. Archives des Sciences Physiques et Naturelles, Nouvelle Période. Tome Trente-huitième (38) Nos. 151-2-3-4-5, 8vo. Genève, Lausanna. Paris. 1870.
- BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, Bulletin for Jan., 1871.
- BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY. Proceedings. Vol. xiii, sigs. 22, 23, 1870.
- ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF RUSSIA. Hora Societatis Entomologicae Russicae. Tome VI, No. 4, Tome VII, Nos. 1, 2, 3, Tome VIII, No. 1, 8vo, Petropoli, 1870.
- HARVARD COLLEGE, Annual Report of the President. 1869-70.
- MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY. Annual Catalogue of the Officers and students, 1870-71, 8vo.
- BOSTON MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. Index to the Catalogue of books, 1 vol., small 4to, 1869.
- NEUCHÂTEL SOCIÉTÉ DES SCIENCES NATURELLES. Bulletin, Tome VIII. 1870. 8vo.
- SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY. Proceedings for 1868-9. Vol. XV. 8vo. Taunton, 1870.
- PUBLISHERS. American Literary Gazette. Canadian Naturalist. Christian World. Eclectic. Essex Banner. Gloucester Telegraph. Haverhill Gazette. Historical Magazine. Lawrence American. Literary World. Little Giant. Lynn Reporter. Medical and Surgical Reporter. Nation. National Farmer. Nature. Peabody Press. Quaritch's Catalogue. Sailors' Magazine. Salem Observer. Silliman's Journal.



Among the donations to the Department of Manuscripts, the following may be specified as a donation from Mrs. N. D. Cole.

PERMIT Mr. Jonathan Cole to pass on or before Sunday next out of Quebec, and on or before Thursday next out of the District, with his wearing apparel, Bedding, and a case and small keg of Liquor, without hindrance or molestation, he behaving as besemeth.

Given under my hand & seal at

[Seal] Quebec this 24th Novem'r 1775

By His Excellency's  
command

H. T. BRASMAHE.

Camp before Quebec May 2, 1776. Received of John Peirce Jun., Esq., assistant Paymaster for the Northern Department by the hands of Mr. Jonathan Cole the sum of twenty-five Thousand Dollars, for which sum I promise to account with the Paymaster General on settlement.

JOHN WINSLOW, Assistant Paymaster.

25,000 Dollars.

PERMIT the bearer Jonathan Cole to pass from home to Boston on his lawful Business.

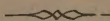
Head Quarters

Montreal 10th May 1776

To all concerned.

B. ARNOLD B. Gen.

Mrs. Edward D. Kimball was elected a resident member. Adjourned.



REGULAR MEETING, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1871.

The President in the chair. The Records of the preceding meeting were read.

The SECRETARY announced the following correspondence.

From Boston Public Library, Feb. 7; Hall, B. H., Troy, N. Y., Feb. 9; Hotchkiss, Frank E., New Haven, Feb. 7, 18; Norton, Charles, Janesville, Wisconsin, Feb. 4; Tracy, C. M., Lynn, Feb. 11; Verrill, A. E., New Haven, Feb. 15.

## The LIBRARIAN reported the following additions.

### *By Donation.*

BUTLER, BENJ. F., M. C. Report of Agriculture, Jan., 1871. Hoar's Speech in U. S. H. R., Feb. 7, 1871.

GAFFIELD, JOHN V. Report of the Librarian of Congress for 1870.

HOTCHKISS, FRANK E., of New Haven, Conn. New Haven Directories for 1840, 41-2, '2-3, '3-4, '4-5, '6-7, '7-8, '9-50, '65-68. Cleveland Directory, 1837-38. Commercial Directory, 1823. Connecticut Register 1847, '8, '52, '3, '4, '5, '8, '9, '61, '62. Beckwith's Almanac, 1852, '9, '61, '2, '3, '8, '70, '1. Prindles' Almanac, 1826, '40, '7, '8, '51, '5, '60. Middlebrook's Almanacs, 1810, '11, '13, '23, '6, '7, '34. Beers's Almanac 1805, '12, '19, '22, '23. Boston Municipal Register for 1867. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 65.

KIMBALL, JAMES. Illustrated Circular, "The National Bridge and Iron Works," 8vo. Boston, 1869.

LEE, FRANCIS H. Catalogue of the Free Public Library in Worcester. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 3.

LEE, JOHN C. Commercial Bulletin, Feb.

PRESTON, CHARLES P. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 8.

STONE, EDWIN M., of Providence, R. I. Report of the Ministry at large. Jan. 8, 1871.

CHARLES SUMNER, U. S. S. Schurz's Speech in United States Senate, Dec. 15th, 1870, on "Political Disabilities." Report of Agriculture for Jan., 1871.

UNKNOWN. History of Illinois and Life of Ninian Edwards. 1 vol. 8vo. Transactions of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society for 1869. 1 vol. 8vo. Report of the Board of Education of Chicago for 1869, 1870. 2 vols. 8vo. Report of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Industrial University for 1868, 1869. 2 vols. 8vo. Miscellaneous pamphlets, 13.

WATERS, J. LINTON, of Chicago, Ill. Report of the Board of Health of Chicago for 1867, '8, '9, and a Sanitary History of Chicago, from 1833 to 1870, 1 vol. 8vo.

### *By Exchange.*

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, Phila. Proceedings, Vol. xi, No. 85, 1870.

NEW YORK MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. Officers and Members for 1870-71. 8vo pamph.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOOL MANUFACTURERS. Bulletin. Vol. II, No. 4. 8vo pamph.

PUBLISHERS. American Booksellers. American Naturalist. Essex Banner. Gardener's Monthly. Gloucester Telegraph. Haverhill Gazette. Land and Water. Lawrence American. Little Giant. Lynn Reporter. Medical and Surgical Reporter. Nation. National Farmer. Nature. Peabody Press. Salem Observer. Sotheran's Catalogue.

Charles E. Fabens and Benjamin H. Fabens were elected resident members. Adjourned.